



# GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON EDUCATION

2021 Annual Report

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# FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

On the morning of January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Governor Laura Kelly's administration began on the steps of the Kansas State Capitol. As the governor delivered her inaugural address, she was flanked by banners, reminding those gathered that at the center of what makes Kansas unique is our unwavering commitment to education, equality, and opportunity for all.

Shortly after Governor Kelly began her tenure, she formed the Governor's Council on Education. She challenged the Council to focus on quality education from birth through adulthood; ensure opportunity for all Kansans, in every region; to be mindful of equality and equity in the diverse experiences of Kansans; and to embrace new, innovation, and bold strategies that have the potential to deliver for Kansas students.

It has been a great honor to work alongside our dynamic and engaged members of the Governor's Council on Education. The Council is comprised of education and business leaders from all regions of our state. Since the formation, members have been committed to continuous improvement and the exploration of best practices by utilizing a future-focused, future-ready mindset. The Council established a consensus building process centered on a standard of excellence for recommendations. Any recommendation advanced to the governor must focus on equity, a return on investment of social and economic impact, keep the needs of business and industry at the forefront, and identify an accountable group charged with implementation.

Since the Council's creation, Governor Kelly has embraced the recommendations of the Council. These recommendations have included:

- Establishing public-private partnerships to support childcare and early learning
- Designating the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund as the Kansas Early Childhood Coordinating Council
- Implementing a comprehensive approach for work-based learning that is inclusive of sustainable funding for work-based learning intermediaries in each region of our state
- Establishing the Advantage Kansas Coordinating Council, which is charged with developing and implementing a strategic plan focused on aligning education and the workforce needs of business and industry
- Improving the Kansas Childcare Assistance Credit by expanding the types of business eligible for the credit
- Accelerating the talent pipeline in computer science and information technology
- Allocating one-time funding for technology and equipment to advance higher education opportunities in state corrections facilities
- Convening a Council of healthcare sector policy makers, regulators, and criminal justice experts to recommend career pathway opportunities for citizens with criminal convictions

Members of the Council are to be commended for their unwavering commitment to meet the charge set forth by our governor. We are grateful for the opportunities to learn from and with these extraordinary Kansans. We are confident that the result of the Council's work will strengthen our state and ensure that Kansas is future-focused and future-ready.

**Dr. Cynthia Lane**  
Co-Chair

**Dr. Fred Dierksen**  
Co-Chair



*Banners reading "Equality, Education, Opportunity" hang on the South portico of the Kansas State Capitol on January 14th, 2019. These banners flanked Governor Laura Kelly as she was sworn in as the 48th Governor of Kansas.*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2019, Governor Laura Kelly created the Governor's Council on Education with the charge of "recommending a comprehensive set of policies designed to align education and training systems, ensure equity and opportunity for all, and promote innovation in an entrepreneurial economy in all regions of Kansas." Since its creation, the Council has invested significant time and effort to identify, examine, and address pressing issues facing Kansas students, families, and businesses. Pursuant to Executive Order 19-03, the Council has prepared this annual report to be provided to the governor and the people of Kansas.

This report will outline the activities of the Council in 2021 and formally present recommendations on a wide array of issues relating to education and workforce development. The report begins with a list of the Council's membership. In the "Background" section, the report provides a brief history of the Council's creation, a discussion of its committee structure, and a short narrative about its year. The report then provides a series of recommendations created by the Council's committees and approved by its full membership. The report concludes with reflections on the Council's work and the importance of these recommendations in continuing to move Kansas forward. Appendices are included to provide further background information.

In this report, the Council presents a series of recommendations that touch on issues vital to Kansas students, families, and businesses. These recommendations are:

- Improve the Kansas Child Day Care Assistance Credit
- Leverage the Capacity of the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund to Blend and Braid Funding Sources to Provide Immediate Assistance to the Childcare Sector
- Prioritize and Invest in Education and Workforce Systems that Accelerate the Talent Pipeline in Computer Science and Information Technology
- Provide Funding for Technology and Equipment Upgrades to Support Correctional Higher Education
- Convene a Commission of Healthcare Sector Policymakers, Regulators, and Criminal Justice Experts to Review and Recommend Career Pathways in Specific Healthcare Sector Careers
- Solve Issues Relating to Work-Based Learning Liability
- Provide Sustainable Funding for Work-Based Learning Intermediaries and the Local Workforce Boards

# ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The following list represents the Council's current membership as appointed by Governor Laura Kelly or pursuant to Executive Order 19-03. The Council is comprised of members from across Kansas that bring a broad array of expertise from the fields of education, business, industry, and government.

## CO-CHAIRS

**Dr. Cynthia Lane** | Kansas City | Regent, Kansas Board of Regents

**Dr. Fred Dierksen** | Dodge City | Superintendent, USD 443

## MEMBERS

**Jeremy Anderson** | Denver, Colorado | President, Education Commission of the States

**Bill Biermann** | Goodland | Superintendent, USD 352

**G.A. Buie** | Topeka | Executive Director, United School Administrators of Kansas

**Irene Caudillo** | Kansas City | President and CEO, El Centro Inc.

**Alan Cobb** | Topeka | President and CEO, Kansas Chamber

**Dr. Craig Correll** | Coffeyville | Superintendent, USD 445

**Mark Desetti** | Topeka | Legislative and Policy Director, Kansas National Education Association

**Barry Downing** | Wichita | President and CEO, Northrock Inc.

**Dr. Blake Flanders** | Topeka | President and CEO, Kansas Board of Regents

**Dr. Nicole Foster** | Pittsburg | Teacher, USD 250

**Dr. Jim Genandt** | Manhattan | President, Manhattan Area Technical College and Kansas Association of Technical Colleges

**Stephanie Harder** | Wichita | Director of Communications and Public Affairs, Textron Aviation

**Cathy Harding** | Kansas City | President and CEO, Wyandotte Health Foundation

**Frank Henderson** | Topeka | Board Member, National School Board Association

**Brian Hogsett** | Overland Park | Technology Chair, Kansas Parent Teacher Association

**Adrian Howie** | Hugoton | Superintendent, USD 210

**Tom Jones** | Montezuma | Manager and Owner, Hy-Plains Feedyard LLC

**Dr. Brian Jordan** | Topeka | Executive Director, Kansas Association of School Boards

**Dr. Steve Karlin** | Garden City | Superintendent, USD 457

**Bob Kreutzer** | Garden City | Chief Financial Officer, Tatro Plumbing (retired)

**Keith Lawing** | Wichita | President and CEO, Kansas Association of Workforce Boards

**Matt Lindsey** | Topeka | President, Kansas Independent College Association

**Donna McDaniel** | Kansas City | Educator in Residence, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation

**Jim McNiece** | Wichita | Board Member, Kansas State Board of Education

**Heather Morgan** | Topeka | Executive Director, Kansas Association of Community College Trustees

**Ed O'Malley** | Wichita | President and CEO, Kansas Leadership Center

**Aaron Otto** | Roeland Park | Executive Director, Johnson County Airport Commission

**Jim Porter** | Fredonia | Chairman, Kansas State Board of Education

**Joe Reardon** | Kansas City | President and CEO, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

**Cheryl Reinhardt** | Leavenworth | Corporate Counsel, Zephyr Products Inc.

**Madai Rivera** | Manhattan | Assistant Director of Student Engagement, Kansas State University

**Melissa Rooker** | Topeka | Executive Director, Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund

**Allen Schmidt** | Hays | Regent, Kansas Board of Regents

**Sherri Schwanz** | Topeka | President, Kansas National Education Association

**Dr. Steve Scott** | Pittsburg | President, Pittsburg State University

**Dr. Mary Sinclair** | Fairway | Advocacy Team, Kansas Parent Teacher Association

**Coleen Tabor** | Wichita | Executive Vice President for Human Resources, Emprise Bank

**Johnny Taylor** | Manhattan | Center Director, Flint Hills Job Corps



**Dr. Alicia Thompson** | Wichita | Superintendent, USD 259

**Susan Wally** | Kansas City | President and CEO, PREP-KC

**Dr. Randy Watson** | Topeka | Commissioner of Education, Kansas State Department of Education

**Dan Whisler** | Lenexa | Educator in Residence, Trane Technologies

**John Wilson** | Topeka | Executive Director, Kansas Action for Children

**Patrick Woods** | Topeka | Manager of Regulatory Affairs, ITC Great Plains

**Maria Worthington** | Overland Park | Teacher, USD 229

**Secretary Jeffery Zmuda** | Topeka | Kansas Department of Corrections



*Governor Laura Kelly signing Executive Order 19-03, establishing the Governor's Council on Education. Members of the Council are gathered to witness the signing.*

# BACKGROUND

## EXECUTIVE ORDER AND OPERATION

On January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019, Governor Laura Kelly signed Executive Order 19-03 establishing the Governor’s Council on Education, a bipartisan group of experts tasked with recommending “a comprehensive set of policies designed to align education and training systems, ensure equity and opportunity, and promote innovation in an entrepreneurial economy in all regions of Kansas.” Governor Kelly has appointed members to the Council that represent stakeholders in the education, child welfare, advocacy, and business communities. The group has worked since 2019 to develop plans that improve educational outcomes and opportunities from early childhood through postsecondary education, enhance workforce development, and stimulate economic growth in Kansas.

The Council has presented recommendations to Governor Kelly and the public since its inception. Throughout the year, the Council meets frequently to identify pressing issues and begin crafting policies that address these needs. Led by two co-chairs, the Council has held a series of meetings and established four committees to address specific elements of its charge. These committees spend the year studying their respective issue areas and work to craft recommendations that address critical needs in these fields. The Council has adopted a “Standard of Excellence” that is used to evaluate and approve these recommendations. The full Council votes to advance committee recommendations based upon this standard, with those receiving approval being included in this report.

The Council’s “Standard of Excellence” states that recommendations must:

- Address equity and opportunity in all regions and for all Kansans
- Align education and workforce systems
- Emphasize local and regional approaches
- Focus on targeted, proven, and measurable strategies designed to realize a return on investment
- Identify an accountable group of entity with implementation, monitoring, and reporting progress
- Meet the charge outlined in Executive Order 19-03 and are “wildly important” to achieving shared prosperity and well-being, growing the economy, and cultivating a highly trained workforce

## THE COUNCIL'S WORK: COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

In 2021, The Council established four committees with the goal of addressing four specific issues relating to education and the economy. Those committees are: Childcare and Early Learning, Future Ready, Talent Pipeline, and Work-Based Learning.

The Childcare and Early Learning Committee is tasked with expanding private-public partnerships focused on ensuring access to quality early learning across the state. The Future Ready Committee is tasked with developing a future ready dashboard to serve as a north star for talent development, and identify strategies to pursue integrated approaches to exploration, development, and pathways to high-demand, high-wage, and critical need careers. The Talent Pipeline Committee is tasked with developing pathways for incarcerated populations to obtain high quality education that prepares them to return to their communities. The Work-Based Learning Committee is tasked with addressing the liability coverage for students engaged in work-based and career connected experiences, and develop best practices for small business employers to engage in work-based learning.

These committees met regularly throughout the year to develop their recommendations. Along every step of the way, the committees honed the scope and intended impact of their work to respond to arising challenges and shifts in economic headwinds.

## THE COUNCIL'S YEAR

The full Council met five times over the course of 2021. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings looked different than in previous years and required flexibility from those involved. As cases rose and fell and public health guidelines shifted, the Council met virtually, in-person, and using a hybrid format. The four committees also held separate meetings throughout the year to develop their recommendations.

These five meetings took place in January, April, August, October, and December. Early in the year, the Council worked to wrap-up and implement its 2020 recommendations. One of these recommendations was the creation of the Advantage Kansas Coordinating Council. In March, Governor Kelly acted on the Council's recommendation to create an auxiliary coordinating council to serve as a statewide forum for crafting policy and legislative proposals aimed at workforce development. As the 2021 Session of the Kansas State Legislature commenced, the Council reviewed enacted and proposed legislation. The Council also received various presentations on national trends, proposed federal laws, and state education and workforce initiatives. Through a series of meetings in the fall, the Council shifted to focusing on presenting, editing, and approving the recommendations presented in this report.

# RECOMMENDATIONS BY COMMITTEE

## CHILDCARE AND EARLY LEARNING

Executive Order 19-03, which established the Governor’s Council on Education specifically tasks the Council with expanding “public-private partnerships focused on universal access to quality early learning” and strengthening “collaboration between agencies and organizations focused on preparing young Kansans to succeed in school and beyond.” To achieve this charge, the Council established the Childcare and Early Learning Committee to review best practices, examine proven models of success, and work to develop recommendations that improve the accessibility of childcare and early learning opportunities for Kansans across the state. The Committee understands that affordable and accessible childcare is vital to the Kansas economy and Kansas families. Supporting efforts to improve the affordability and accessibility of childcare will jumpstart the educational development of Kansas kids, provide quality careers for childcare professionals, and increase opportunities for working Kansans and those looking to enter or return to the workforce.

The Committee has been led by Melissa Rooker, Executive Director of the Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund, and Dr. Craig Correll, Superintendent of Coffeyville Public Schools (UDS 445).

The following are recommendations related to childcare and early learning:

### **Improve the Kansas Child Day Care Assistance Credit**

The Child Day Care Assistance Credit is an existing tax credit, administered by the Kansas Department of Revenue and intended to incentivize businesses to provide childcare directly, contract within their community for childcare for their employees, assist in the expansion in the availability of childcare, or improve affordability for employees. A business that provides these services is entitled to a credit against their income tax or privilege tax liability. Kansas can improve the program and expand utilization by:

- **Expanding the types of businesses eligible for the credit**  
Currently C-Corporations and privileged taxpayers (financial institutions) are the only filer eligible to claim the credit.

The Council does not recommend increasing the \$3 million cap that currently exists for credits claimed, but rather expand the access to the credit. Currently, the program is highly underutilized, with only about 3.5% of the \$3 million

allocated being claimed. Increased utilization of the credit has the potential to bring an important funding stream into the mix, creating a more robust system that includes federal, state, and local dollars and individual contributions.

This credit is just one tool in the toolbox of policy ideas designed to increase equitable access to affordable childcare, build supply, and improve quality.

### **Leverage the Capacity of the Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund to Blend and Braid Funding Sources to Provide Immediate Assistance to the Childcare Sector**

Due to the pressures brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the childcare sector is facing unprecedented challenges—from surging start-up costs to staffing bottlenecks to increased demand. Organizations and providers are facing obstacles that hinder their ability to provide adequate and accessible care for parents, children, and families. Rather than creating a new entity, the Council recommends using the existing governance structure of the Kansas Children’s Cabinet and Trust Fund as the point of connection to align and organize a wide variety of funding sources, both public and private, to meet community drive needs.

The Children’s Cabinet can serve as an experienced grant-maker, create appropriate and necessary reporting standards and other compliance protocols in order to provide funding to close gaps, and catalyze community-driven response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The committee examined several models of successful public-private partnerships in Kansas, including The Opportunity Project Early Learning Center in Wichita and the Dr. Jerry Hamm Early Learning Center in Coffeyville. Through the examination of these, the Council learned:

- There is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Successful partnerships develop solutions that address unique community needs.
- High-quality early learning opportunities for at-risk children produces extraordinary improvements in short-term and long-term student outcomes
- Successful partnerships require committed stakeholders exercising leadership to achieve a common vision for children and families in their community

By utilizing the Children’s Cabinet to organize funding sources, we can ensure equity and expanded access to childcare services, that alignment exists among programs and services across the state, and strengthen partnerships between schools and other early childhood partners.

## FUTURE READY

Executive Order 19-03 tasked the Council with “encouraging seamless transitions from K-12 to technical schools, community colleges, and universities and on to business and industry” because such alignment “is vital to realizing our shared vision of increased prosperity and improved well-being for all Kansans.” The Council created the Future Ready Committee with the goal of achieving this task. Over the course of the last year, the Future Ready Committee has studied and identified methods for aligning educational competencies with high-demand, high wage, and critical need occupations, retaining postsecondary graduates at all levels (certifications, Associate Degrees, Bachelor’s Degrees, Graduate Degrees) in Kansas, attracting postsecondary completers from regions outside of Kansas, and growing employment opportunities in Kansas’s comparative advantage sectors. The Committee is focused on discovering ways to further invest in career and technical education (CTE) that will provide Kansas a significant return on investment.

The Committee has been led by Coleen Tabor, Executive Vice President of Human Resources at Emprise Bank, and Dan Whisler, Educator in Resident at Trane.

The Committee has developed the following recommendation:

### **Prioritize and Invest in Education and Workforce Systems that Accelerate the Talent Pipeline in Computer Science and Information Technology**

Following a robust review of ways to better align career and technical education with high-demand, high-wage, and critical need careers, the Committee found that significant investments must be made in developing systems for students to receive the training and education necessary to earn industry certifications and credentials or degrees in areas such as coding, computer programming, network systems, cybersecurity, and data analytics.

To do so, public and private entities must work together to develop scalable systems that advance programmatic instruction across the state. In order to address targeted workforce skills that are vital to the state’s economic stability and vitality:

- Leadership within the Kansas State Department of Education and the Kansas Board of Regents should work with key government agencies to initiate plans to attract and train educators in computer science and information technologies
- Leadership within the Kansas Department of Commerce, Department of Labor, Kansas State Department of Education, and Kansas Board of

Regents should engage with business and industry to actively communicate the opportunities that developing skills in computer science and information technology provide to K-12, postsecondary, adult education, and other prospective students who focus their studies in these sectors.

- Leaders should develop action strategies that lead to tangible outcomes of enrollment, course completion, and earning one or more of the following: industry recognized credentials, academic certificates and degrees, internships, apprenticeships, work-based learning or project-based learning assignments, and career entry with a Kansas business or in the Kansas public sector.

Successfully achieving this recommendation will take time and coordinated effort. Despite this, Kansas can create this talent pipeline by using a three-year phased-in approach that scales career and technical education opportunities in schools across Kansas. During the first year, those involved in executing this recommendation should:

- Develop a state-wide pilot program for the introduction of data analytics into K-12 schools
- Develop a state-wide, interagency team to begin to identify grant opportunities that will provide financial support for the scaling of career and technical education and workforce development opportunities. Among others, this team should include the Kansas Board of Regents, Kansas State Department of Education, National Coalition for Certification Centers (NC3), Kansas Association of Educational Service Agencies (KAESA), Kansas Technical Education Authority, and the Kansas Department of Commerce
- Partner with NC3 to launch NC3's Data Analytics Certification #1 in schools across the state
- Request funding to support the industry training of approximately 70-85 teachers from 10-12 districts and technical colleges in cooperation with the seven regional services centers across Kansas.
- Host public trainings at area technical and community colleges with industry programs to build upon conversations related to regional CTE career opportunities in Kansas

In the second year, those involved should:

- Expand the use of NC's Data Analytics Certification #1

- Introduce Data Analytics Certification #2 trainings for those school that participated in the previous year's course
- Begin piloting NC3's Precision Measurement Instruments certification
- Begin piloting NC3's Fundamentals of Electricity and Introduction to Mechatronix certifications by using regional community and technical colleges to build connections for higher cost programs
- Identify and develop certification opportunities available through CompTIA in information technology, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity

In the third year, those involved should:

- Build on the number of districts offering stackable certifications (from various industry organizations) and increase the number of stackable certifications available in K-12 and postsecondary schools across Kansas

Importantly, this recommendation was crafted with a keen focus on equity. We know that students in rural regions of the state and from lower socio-economic backgrounds face increased barriers to obtaining CTE opportunities and certifications. By using the industry-recognized credentials offered through NC3, students will be able to receive marketable skills and certifications at no additional cost to themselves or their families. Once teachers have completed the industry-provided professional training, they are able to offer certification opportunities for any number of students.

By developing these pilot programs and supporting the integration of stackable career and technical education certifications in K-12 course work, Kansas students will see more opportunities for career exploration and awareness, while building on the goal for providing "CTE for all students." We now live in a connect world that requires interconnected and interdisciplinary educational opportunities for students, especially in the field of career and technical education. Showing students the real-world application and career opportunities as a part of the content they are learning will create crucial pipelines from the classroom to the workforce. By growing awareness of these opportunities, we can better encourage students to consider continuing their education and finding careers here in Kansas.



## TALENT PIPELINE

As the Council has discussed how best to provide educational opportunities to all Kansas and cultivate a highly skilled and trained workforce, conversations have focused on how best to prepare students in all settings for their future. In accordance with the Kansas Department of Correction's strategic plan, "Pathway for Success," the Council has worked to support the plan's mission of investing in individuals by providing "opportunities to acquire new experiences and skills that support personal and professional advancement and future success." The Council created the Talent Pipeline Committee to identify and cultivate those experiences for individuals in correctional facilities.

Given 98% of those current incarcerated in Kansas correctional facilities will return to their home communities, it is vital that corrections populations have the skills and knowledge necessary for them to transition back and find suitable employment.<sup>1</sup> Of adults on post-release supervision, 51% of men and 41% of women are unemployed or unemployable. It has also been shown that recidivism also greatly decreases when incarcerated populations are provided with educational services and opportunities to develop marketable skills. Given these statistics, investing in the creation of educational opportunities for corrections populations will result in improved outcomes for returning citizens and communities across the state. By increasing the opportunities for these Kansans to obtain certifications and degrees while incarcerated, more returning citizens will have the tools to achieve meaningful employment, contribute to their communities, and support their families.

The Committee has been led by Secretary Jeffery Zmuda, Kansas Department of Corrections, and Heather Morgan, Executive Director of the Kansas Association of Community College Trustees.

The following recommendations address higher and career education for corrections populations:

### **Provide Funding for Technology and Equipment Upgrades to Support Correctional Higher Education**

Beginning in 2023, corrections populations will become eligible for federal Pell Grants, likely creating an increased demand for higher education opportunities in correctional facilities. To prepare for this increase, an investment in technology for the Department will allow for more effective and impactful instruction while allowing more perspective students to access and utilize educational services.

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<sup>1</sup> Kansas Department of Corrections, FY20 Annual Report

This recommendation requests a series of technologies developed to serve corrections populations in the education endeavors. Funding of this proposal should include the following equipment:

<b>Technology/Equipment</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>One-time Cost</b>
Internet/WiFi Hardware	Establish resident-level access to WiFi to enable full participation in higher education programming. Equipment includes corrections-approved wiring, conduit, cabling, and access points	\$202,312
APDS Tablets (\$411 each)	Approximately 1,000 residents at one time could have a secure, corrections-approved tablet where they would complete a full diagnostic assessment and have individualized programming based on their needs. Programming would range from Adult Basic Education to GED Ready and Test Prep curriculum with quantifiable gains.	\$411,000
APDS WiFi Support (\$449)		\$449,000
APDS Essential Education (\$87.76)		\$87,760
APDS Charging Carts (\$3400)		\$102,000
Neatboards with Mobile Stands (\$8593)	Neatboards are corrections-approved electronic whiteboards allowing for programming to occur asynchronously and across multiple locations. A total of 5 Neatboards would be placed at each of Kansas's 8 adult facilities.	\$343,720
SecureBooks (\$499)	SecureBooks are PC-based laptops designed specifically for corrections environments. Any student enrolled in CTE/PSE programming would have access to a SecureBook.	\$499,000
Secure Dock (\$149)		\$149,000
VS600M CLD Simulator (\$115,000)	A lower-cost alternative to standard CDL programming, these could be utilized as a stand-alone certification or intandem with Pell-eligible college programming leading to an Associate's degree. Each of the 8 adult facilities would implement programming of this nature.	\$920,000
Lincoln Electric- Virtual Welders (\$43,770)	This advanced technology enables students to not only learn the current welding techniques in demand by employers, but also allow for more finite and exact welding instruction. The units would help conserve space within each facility, as well as increase security. A total of 10 units will be placed at each adult facility.	\$3,501,600
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,665,392</b>

Given the state's current fiscal health, these funds would be a good source of one-time funding. The state is currently seeing significant investments, which have created an environment conducive to making significant one-time expenditures. The funds for this recommendation could be used to assist in the state meeting its Higher Education Maintenance of Effort that is required by the American Rescue Plan Act or by using Strengthening People and Revitalizing Kansas (SPARK) Task Force funding that is provided for discretionary use by the American Rescue Plan Act. This recommendation was also presented to the Joint Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice Oversight. The Committee "recommends strong support for a \$6.6 million proposal...directed toward IT upgrades for WiFi devices, PC tablets, as well as the equipment such as the welding and CDL simulators.

By funding this recommendation, the Kansas Department of Corrections could be able to ensure more corrections populations have the opportunity to learn while incarcerated and obtain the critical skills and knowledge. One of the Department's core beliefs is that "everyone has the potential for future success through effective development and support." Providing these funds will allow returning citizens to better prepare to return to their communities and support themselves once released.

### **Convene a Commission of Healthcare Sector Policymakers, Regulators, and Criminal Justice Experts to Review and Recommend Career Pathways in Specific Healthcare Sector Careers**

Many returning citizens have aspirations of working in the healthcare sector upon their release and a deep desire to provide essential medical services to Kansans in need of care. Given the complexities of the healthcare sector, the goal of this recommendation is to determine whether the healthcare industry would be amiable to having returning citizens working in their industry. Like many other sectors, there is a growing need for more healthcare workers that could stabilize workforce shortages that have only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prior to developing this recommendation, the Department of Corrections engaged in substantial research to determine what careers may be facing workforce shortages and what other states have done to create pipelines for returning citizens to utilize upon release. The Department has review best practices from other states to ensure that these practices would align Kansas with counterparts in other states and national trends.

Currently, restrictions on this type of employment are not substantially tied to the actual risk that is posed by hiring those with criminal convictions. The staffing

needs of the healthcare sector can safely be met, in part, by returning citizens. Given these restrictions and the educational instruction limitations in correction facilities, this recommendation suggests that a commission review the following positions:

- Physical Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Respiratory Therapist
- Nurse
- Medical Assistant
- Lab Assistant
- Phlebotomist
- CNA/CMA

This recommendation also suggests various best practices that should be considered as a commission, the Department, and other stakeholders consider ways to develop a healthcare pipeline. Given the longstanding practice of excluding returning citizens from employment in this field, there must be incremental changes that allow time for the industry to evaluate how well such training and employment is working for the patient, the employee, and the employer. To ensure that safety is kept at the core of this proposal, restrictions should be put into place to ensure that only individuals with certain criminal convictions are allowed to participate. Instead of using general language when restricting employment, the recommendation also suggests ensuring that employment opportunities list relevant invalidating offenses and does not provide an automatic disqualification for anyone with a criminal conviction. In addition to specifically tailoring eligibility, more trust could be enacting probationary periods or an apprenticeship period, rather than implementing lengthy waiting periods that delay a returning citizen's eligibility for a position. Finally, this recommendation does not suggest that licensing standards should be changed to accommodate returning citizens. Rather, the any study of this issue should review the idea of allowing for waivers, appeals, or probationary periods for those seeking employment that requires a license or other credential.

Any commission should include representatives from the Department of Corrections, hospitals and hospital associations, nursing home associations, educators in health-related programs, health employee associations, patient representatives, local Chambers of Commerce and their members, and regulating and licensing agencies.

Given the importance of engaging with stakeholders in the healthcare sector, there should first be open dialogue between those involved to develop a proposal that works for all. The quality of care and safety are of the utmost importance, so

having the support of all stakeholders is critical. This recommendation is a first step in addressing the needs of communities across Kansas. It is the belief of the Council that it is possible to both provide quality opportunities for the future employment of returning citizens and work to alleviate the workforce shortages in the health sector at the same time.



*Members of the Council at the October meeting.*

## WORK-BASED LEARNING

Executive Order 19-03 tasked the Council with expanding “public-private partnerships focused on access and work-based learning experiences” and developing “strategies and tactics to pursue and integrated approach to career exploration and workforce development.” The Council initially created the Work Based Learning Committee to develop best practices, explore partnerships that expand access to work-based learning experiences. Once established (in partnership with KSDE), the committee turned its focus on policy and legislation that addresses liability and workers compensation coverage for students who engage in work-based and career connected experiences. Next, the Committee will work to develop resources specific for small employers to understand how and why they should engage with provide educational opportunities to students and incentives that will promote work-based learning across the state.

The Committee has been led by Adrian Howie, Superintendent of Hugoton Public Schools (USD 210), and Keith Lawing, President and CEO of the Kansas Association of Workforce Boards.

The following two recommendations address issues relating to work-based learning:

### **Solve Issues Relating to Work-Based Learning Liability**

One of the most enduring challenges to expanding work-based learning experiences for students across Kansas has been a lack of clarity on workplace liability. The Kansas State Department of Education has adopted plan designed to integrate a Work-Based Learning Continuum into primary to secondary education settings that exposes students to varying levels of career awareness, exploration, and specific preparation activities. At the most advanced end of this continuum are activities that provide students with skills and experiences that focus on tailored career preparation, like internships, youth apprentices, entrepreneurship, and service learning.

In 2021, the Kansas House of Representatives passed House Substitute for Senate Bill 91, which provided liability protection for businesses, municipalities, and educational institutions that participate in high school work-based learning programs. The bill provided that school districts are responsible for any injuries to students participating in these programs. The bill does not provide immunity for the student or business in cases of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

The Work-Based Learning Committee has long been supportive of finding ways to expand these types of career preparation opportunities, including solving issues relating to work-based learning liability. Great progress has been made on this issue, but we have yet to get a result. There remains work to be done and

members of this Council and Committee are committed to working towards legislative or market-based solutions that address the liability issue for unpaid work-based learning experiences.

House Substitute for Senate Bill 91 goes a long way to addressing longstanding challenges that have stifled the proliferation of work-based learning opportunities across the state. Various stakeholders, businesses, and school districts have been engaged on this issue for some time. This engagement should continue to ensure a bill that is amiable to all parties becomes law. Conversations between these entities and legislators must continue because solving this issue is vital to our students, our businesses, and the Kansas economy.

### **Provide Sustainable Funding for Work-Based Learning Intermediaries and the Local Workforce Boards**

As a result of previous recommendations from members of the Council and leaders at the Kansas Department of Commerce and Kansas Department of Education, the state is currently conducting a cross-agency work-based learning regional pilot that will serve as a model to scale high-quality work-based learning opportunities across Kansas and create statewide system alignment. The pilot utilizes Work-Based Learning Intermediaries who connect high schools and employers from local business and industry to coordinate work-based learning experiences. These intermediaries work to support career readiness and work to serve as conveners and connectors between schools and business in an effort to ease the process of coordination between the two. To do so, intermediaries are responsible for identifying work experience opportunities that have both educational and occupational value that aligns with the Kansas Department of Education's Work-Based Learning Personalized Learning Plan. These intermediaries ensure that employment opportunities exist with local businesses that meet the individual needs of students and provide them with valuable experience that aligns with their academic goals and career interests.

The Work-Based Learning Intermediaries that are currently operating under the initial pilot have seen success, but will require an expanded network to streamline efforts, leverage existing resources, maximize employer partnerships, and ensure equity and quality. To properly scale the pilot and expand the opportunities provided by these intermediaries, more funding will be required to expand the pilot program in communities across Kansas.

The Department of Commerce has requested \$714,000 to support staffing the Work-Based Learning Intermediaries for a third year and invest in developing training workshops for the Intermediaries and Local Workforce Boards. This



recommendation aligns with the strategic plan of the Advantage Kansas Coordinating Council and its efforts to secure funding that expands work-based learning experiences. These funds will allow the intermediaries to continue their vital work and get more employers directly engaged in work-based learning activities that provide students with applied learning opportunities. With these funds, intermediaries will have greater resources to provide a roadmap for scaling the pilot statewide and to justify more sustained funding for continued implementation of their efforts.



*Governor Laura Kelly with Co-Chair Dr. Cindy Lane and Alan Cobb, CEO of the Kansas Chamber, at the announcement of the creation of the Advantage Kansas Coordinating Council. The creation of the AKCC was spearheaded by the Governor's Council on Education.*



## CONCLUSION

This report outlines a series of recommendations and action steps that various public and private entities can take in the coming year to advance educational opportunities for Kansans from all corners of the state. The Council has devoted considerable time and effort in crafting this report and believes that the recommendations presented here are attainable, common-sense solutions that will create a return on investment for the Kansas economy while preparing Kansans for a rapidly changing workforce.

Some of these recommendations, like extending the Child Day Care Assistance Tax, will require the Kansas Legislature to pass legislation, others will need to be included in the Governor's FY23 Budget. Furthermore, some recommendations can be achieved through agency-level coordination. No matter the method, these recommendations have been thoroughly vetted by the Council and their enactment is key to keep Kansas moving forward.

Along every step of the way, the Council has been committed to increasing prosperity and improving the well-being of all Kansans. Kansans know that providing quality education is vital to the success of our state and critical to the development of Kansas kids. By creating an integrated approach to career preparedness and aligning education with the needs of business, Kansas will be better positioned to create more vibrant communities, cultivate opportunities for all Kansans, and promote an innovated economy. If we want to increase prosperity and the well-being of all Kansas, we cannot lose focus on creating seamless transitions between early learning, PreK-12, and postsecondary education that leads to high-growth, innovative opportunities for business and industry.

As previously mentioned, what makes Kansas unique is our unwavering commitment to education, opportunity, and equity. Those key tenants have always been the driving force behind the work of this Council. Together, we can continue to make these values a reality for all Kansans.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: THANK YOU

The presentation of this annual report has been an effort accomplished by many people brought together for the purpose of serving public education in Kansas. Every meeting has intentionally incorporated Governor Kelly's tenants of education, equality and opportunity for all. First, we would like to thank the entire Governor's Council on Education for the attention, effort, and commitment that brought this report to fruition. Their never-ending focus has kept the work of the Council moving forward, despite the challenges that the past few years have brought upon all of us. It should also be mentioned that members of the Council participate on a voluntary basis, motivated by their deep dedication to improving educational outcomes for Kansans. For that, we cannot understate how grateful we are for their service.

As the Council's work progressed, we began to focus our effort through our four committees: Childcare and Early Learning, Future Ready, Talent Pipeline, and Work-Based Learning. Each committee was led by Co-Chairs who deserve many thanks for keeping and advancing the Council's charge. Melissa Rooker and Dr. Craig Corell, Coleen Tabor and Dan Whisler, Sec. Jeffery Zmuda and Heather Morgan, and Adrian Howie and Keith Lawing deserve extra recognition for their coordination, continual efforts, and willingness to go above and beyond. Each committee has accomplished meaningful gains in their respective areas, largely because of the Co-Chairs' leadership.

The Council would like to thank the Kansas Association of School Boards for providing a consistent meeting location and for their hospitality.

The Council is also grateful for the assistance and support of staff who've brought exceptional expertise and institutional knowledge to the table. We thank Amanda Peterson, Mike Beene, Angela Berland, Carla Whiteside-Hicks, Margie Phelps, Natalie Clark, and Stacy Smith for their support. Special thanks also goes to Zach Vincent, Deputy Director for Legislative Affairs in the Office of Governor Kelly, for his quality contributions, tireless efforts, and organizational skills.

Finally, Governor Laura Kelly deserves the biggest credit. She has continually demonstrated her commitment to public education. She has given this Council a voice, lent her ear, and provided input and support that has given the Governor's Council on Education value and purpose.

To all of you, we say thanks with sincere appreciation.

## APPENDIX B: EXECUTIVE ORDER 19-03

### EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 19-03

#### Establishing the Governor's Council on Education

**WHEREAS**, Kansas is committed to a shared vision of increased prosperity and improved well-being for all Kansans; and

**WHEREAS**, providing quality education is vital to the success and well-being of individual Kansans, and is essential to growing the economy and cultivating a highly trained and skilled workforce; and

**WHEREAS**, an integrated approach to career preparation, beginning with early learning and continuing through post-secondary education, would benefit individuals, companies, industries, and the State as a whole; and

**WHEREAS**, aligning education with state agencies and business needs will help create vibrant communities, cultivate opportunities for Kansans, and promote an innovative, entrepreneurial economy; and

**WHEREAS**, ensuring access to quality early learning, and encouraging seamless transitions from K-12 to technical schools, community colleges, and universities and on to business and industry is vital to realizing our shared vision of increased prosperity and improved well-being for all Kansans; and

**WHEREAS**, economic growth depends on cooperation and coordination between the education community and high-growth, innovative businesses and industries; and

**WHEREAS**, upholding values of transparency, inclusion, and accountability between educators, businesses, industry, and our broader Kansas community will help create effective working relationships that will aid in the achievement of our shared vision.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Kansas, I hereby establish the Governor's Council on Education ("Council"):

1. The Governor shall appoint the following to serve as members of the Council:
  - a. One representative from each of the following agencies or organizations:
    - i. Governor's Office
    - ii. Kansas Department of Education
    - iii. Kansas Board of Regents
    - iv. Kansas Children's Cabinet
    - v. Kansas Department for Children and Families
    - vi. Kansas Department of Labor

- vii. Kansas Department of Commerce
  - viii. Kansas Association of School Boards
  - ix. United School Administrators of Kansas
  - x. Kansas Association of Community Colleges
  - xi. Kansas Independent Colleges Association
  - xii. Kansas Association of Technical Colleges
  - xiii. Kansas Association of Workforce Boards
  - xiv. Kansas Parent Teacher Association
  - xv. Kansas National Education Association
- b. Between five and ten members of the business community.
  - c. Public school superintendents representing the various regions of Kansas.
  - d. Members of non-profit organizations who have expertise in areas that could assist in advancing the goals, strategies, and operations of the Council.
  - e. Additional individuals the Governor determines have relevant experience or qualifications.
- 2. The Governor shall select a chair and vice-chair, or co-chairs, from the Council's membership.
  - 3. Members shall receive no compensation or reimbursements for expenses and shall serve voluntarily. Officers or employees of state agencies who are appointed to the Council as part of their duties shall be authorized to participate on the Council and may claim subsistence, allowance, mileage or associated expenses from their respective agency budgets as permitted by law.
  - 4. The Council shall be subject to the Kansas Open Records Act and the Kansas Open Meetings Act.
  - 5. Plans, reports, or recommendations of any nature adopted by the Council shall be considered advice to the Governor, and shall not be construed as official policies, positions, or interpretations of laws, rules, or regulations by any department or agency of state government, nor shall any such department or agency be bound in any manner to consider such advice when conducting their advisory and regulatory affairs.
  - 6. The Council shall:
    - a. Develop strategies and tactics to pursue an integrated approach to career exploration and workforce development that aligns with and complements the "Kansans Can" initiative of the Kansas State Department of Education and focuses on the human capital needs of business and industry across the state;

- b. Expand public-private partnerships focused on universal access to quality early learning, and strengthen collaboration between agencies and organizations focused on preparing young Kansans to succeed in school and beyond;
  - c. Expand public-private partnerships focused on access and work-based learning experiences and career pathways tied to high-demand, high-wage, and critical-needs careers in Kansas;
  - d. Identify goals, initiatives, strategy metrics, and systems metrics, and report progress on each to the Governor annually; and
  - e. Inform and advise the Governor on educational initiatives and policies to improve the overall success of education and workforce development in Kansas.
7. The Council shall be staffed by the Education Commission of the States, along with the Kansas Department of Education and Kansas Board of Regents.
8. The Council shall meet quarterly or as often as the Chair or co-Chairs of the Council determine is necessary.
9. The Council shall submit regular reports to the Governor with an annual report submitted in December of each year.
10. Executive Order 18-10 is hereby rescinded.

This document shall be filed with the Secretary of State as Executive Order No. 19-03. It shall become effective immediately and remain in force until rescinded.

# APPENDIX C: CO-CHAIR BIOGRAPHIES

## CO-CHAIRS

### Dr. Fred Dierksen



Dr. Fred Dierksen's tenure as superintendent of Dodge City Public Schools began in July 2017.

Dr. Dierksen obtained his post-secondary education from Sterling College, Fort Hays State University, and received his Doctorate of Educational Administration from Wichita State University. His first teaching position was in Jetmore, Kansas, where he was quickly promoted to Principal, later to Principal of Sterling Grade School, where he transitioned to Superintendent of Sterling Public Schools. While in Sterling, Kansas, he expanded programs and grant funding to support ongoing learning for pre-K through 12th grade students.

As an active community member, Dr. Dierksen has served on numerous boards and advisory councils. Most recently, serving on the Governor's Council of Education and the Board of Directors for the Kansas School Superintendent' Association. He has received many honors, including the 2020 Excellence in Educational Leadership Co-Award, along with Council member Steve Karlin, from the University Council for Educational Administration.

### Dr. Cynthia Lane



Dr. Cynthia Lane has more than 40 years of professional experience in the field of education. Dr. Lane is currently the CEO of Evolve Education Leadership L.L.C. Lane serves on the Governor's Council of Education, the Advantage Kansas Coordinating Council, and the Kansas Board of Regents. Dr. Lane was the superintendent of Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools from 2010 to 2018, where the district achieved its highest graduation rate, significantly increased early childhood programs, and implemented the diploma plus initiative focused on career exploration and preparation, graduating students with their diploma plus industry recognized credentials, early college, internships, and other key endorsements. She received her Ed.D. from the

University of Kansas along with her M.S. and B.S. Ed. from Pittsburg State University.

## APPENDIX D: 2021 MEETING AGENDAS/MINUTES

# Governor's Council on Education

## Agenda (revised)

January 29, 2021

9:00 – 11:00

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- I. **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
  - II. **Roll Call, Review of the Agenda, Approval of Minutes from 9.17.20**
  - III. **New Business**
    - A. Approval of Recommendations
      - a. Establish the Advantage Kansas Coordinating Council, Signature Initiatives and Goals submitted by the Advantage Kansas Coalition
      - b. Improve the Kansas Child Day Care Assistance Credit submitted by the Public-Private Partnership Early Childhood and Child Care Committee
    - B. Reports of Committees and Work-groups
      - Early Childhood and Childcare
        - Strengthening the Early Childhood Continuum Committee
        - Private Public Partnership Committee
      - Market Value Assets and Work-Based Learning Joint Committee
      - Talent Pipeline (Returning Citizens)
  - IV. **Old Business**
  - V. **Closing Remarks**

Next Council Meeting April 29,2021, 9:00 – 11:00am

# Governor's Council on Education

## Agenda

April 29, 2021

9:00 – 11:00

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**I. Welcome and Opening Remarks**

**II. Roll Call, Review of the Agenda, Approval of Minutes** from January 29, 2021

**III. New Business**

C. Overview of Key Legislation Impacting Education and Workforce Development – Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards

i. Council Discussion of Key Issues

D. Overview of Key National Legislative Trends – Tom Keily, Education Commission of the States

E. Implications for the Council on Education - Discussion

**IV. Old Business**

Reports of Committees and Workgroups

- Early Childhood and Childcare
  - Strengthening the Early Childhood Continuum Committee
  - Private Public Partnership Committee
- Work-Based Learning/ Diploma Plus Market Value Assets
  - Update on liability coverage SB 31
  - Draft Job Description for WBL intermediaries
- Advantage Kansas Coordinating Council

**V. Closing Remarks**

Next Council Meeting August 26, 2021 9:00 – 2:00 (in person; Location TBD)



# Governor's Council on Education

## Agenda

August 26, 2021

9:00 – 11:00

KASB, 1420 SW Arrowhead Road

Virtual option available

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### I. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Council Co-chairs

- a. Review of the Agenda and Approval of April 29, 2021 Minutes

### II. New Business

- A. Update on the Framework for Growth Trent Armbrust

- B. Graduation Taskforce Jim McNeice

- C. "Free Community College" Update Heather Morgan

### III. Standing Reports

- A. Advantage Kansas Coordinating Council Dr. Shelly Kiblinger, Co-Chair

- B. Reports of Committees and Workgroups

#### Committee Co-Chairs

- a. Future-Ready Coleen Tabor / Dan Whisler
- b. Talent Ready Sec. Zmuda / Heather Morgan
- c. Work-Based Learning Adrian Howie / Keith Lawing
- d. Childcare and Early Learning Dr. Craig Correll / Melissa Rooker

### IV. Old Business

### V. Closing Remarks

#### Next Council Meetings

October 28, 2021 9:00 – 11:00 (TBD); December 9, 2021, 9:00 – 11:00 (Topeka)

# Governor's Council on Education

## Agenda

October 14, 2021

9:00 – 11:00

Virtual Meeting

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### I. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Council Co-chairs

- b. Approval of August 26, 2021 Minutes and Review of the Agenda

### II. New Business

- D. Reports of Committees and Presentation of Draft Recommendations

- e. Future-Ready

- f. Talent Pipeline

- g. Work-Based Learning

- h. Childcare and Early Learning

#### Committee Co-Chairs

Coleen Tabor / Dan Whisler

Sec. Zmuda / Heather Morgan

Adrian Howie / Keith Lawing

Dr. Craig Correll / Melissa Rooker

### III. Standing Reports

- C. Advantage Kansas Coordinating Council     Alan Cobb, Co-Chair

### IV. Old Business

### V. Closing Remarks

#### Next Council Meetings

October 28<sup>th</sup> Co-Chair Briefing with Governor Kelly; December 9, 2021, 9:00 – 11:00 (TBD)

# Governor's Council on Education

## Agenda

December 9, 2021

9:00 – 12:00

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### I. Welcome and Opening Remarks Council Co-chairs

- a. Approval of October 14, 2021 Minutes and Review of the Agenda

### II. Old Business

- a. Standing Report of the Advantage Kansas Coordinating Council – Alan Cobb

### III. New Business

- E. Committee Break Out Sessions

- F. Presentation of Recommendations for Approval

- a. Future-Ready
- b. Talent Pipeline
- c. Work-Based Learning
- d. Childcare and Early Learning

#### Committee Co-Chairs

Coleen Tabor / Dan Whisler

Sec. Zmuda / Heather Morgan

Adrian Howie / Keith Lawing

Dr. Craig Correll / Melissa Rooker

### IV. Closing Remarks

#### Next Council Meeting

Annual Report of Recommendations to Governor Kelly, January 14, 2022 9:00 Capital,  
Old Supreme Court Chamber, 3 floor

